

Letter 1 - establish a Wilderness Unit in the Office of Environment and Heritage

Ensure that wilderness is properly managed in NSW; help establish a Wilderness Unit within the Office of Environment and Heritage.

Points for your letter:

Wilderness covers one third of the national park estate and requires professional management to ensure the ecological integrity of these rare areas. A Wilderness Unit would be an effective advocate on wilderness and nature-based park management within Government.

A Wilderness Unit is essential for the provision of expert advice to government and the public on wilderness education, assessment, protection, management and use. Wilderness education, an objective of the *Wilderness Act, 1987*, is necessary for the long term protection of these areas, but has received little funding over the years.

Through wilderness we can learn and experience living in harmony with our environment. A Wilderness Unit would also provide expert advice on proposed wilderness activities and avoid management blunders, such as allowing recreation reliant upon commercial hut accommodation or horses.

Could you please explain the long term strategy of your Government to advance the understanding of wilderness values in the community and what measures are being taken to ensure these areas are protected for all time?

Could you also please outline the Government's programme to develop educational resources on wilderness for primary and secondary schools?